4: Pierson Z-4, 5 (1935-1937) 1967
SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11

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took over at least three cultural elements whose presence in the mores of colonial Brazil may be significant for our problem: the practice of concubinage, the subordinate position of woman in the household, and the comparative absence of color consciousness.

It may be that the Portuguese, like the Moors and other Mohammedans, were, as several commentators have said, a "color-blind" people; that is, awareness of color and other racial differences was not so pronounced with them as with us. It is probably true that the *conceptions* laid down in the culture materially influence the *perceptions* which individuals have.

Perhaps one reason the Portuguese in the New Country and their descendants cohabited with individuals from other races and interbred so extensively was that such behavior had long been common in the Old Country, where their ancestors had taken over from the Moors oriental customs tolerant of plural marriage. Even when Orientals exclude the children of concubines from the legitimate family in an attempt to preserve its status, emphasis is upon preserving status rather than purity of race.

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Concubinage, or *mancebia*, as it is known in Bahia, seems to have been quite common throughout the history of Brazil. It appears always to have been more or less socially sanctioned and accepted into the mores. Divorce is illegal, and many marriages are made for family convenience. It is not rare today in Bahia for a man with a legal wife and family to keep in separate establishments one or more *amantes*.[1] The

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[1] In one reported instance there are five; in another, eight. Usually the man, owing to the expense involved, is well to do; the women are from the lower strata. For instance, a wealthy and prominent intellectual figure lives most of the time apart from his legal wife with a mulatto woman who is intelligent, "attractive," and has traveled (with him) in France, Belgium,

[SALVADOR]

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*563 565 829 the Bahians congregate together or avoid one another much more in terms of their social rank than of their color or their race.

[656] [626] Crossbreeding is not forbidden by any law and comes up against the disapprobation of opinion only to the extent that it affects the structure of classes firmly established in the country: upper strata made up almost exclusively of Whites, that is to say, persons of white phenotype or at least "socially white," lower strata made up chiefly of colored people; a classification which makes classes and racial types approximately coincide, without, however, making them identical.

175 *563 • [595] From the early days of Portuguese colonization there has been a large number of colored persons in Bahia. In the beginning the colonists mixed largely with the tupi /Tupi/ Indian women of the region, living with them in a state of concubinage and often [567] polygamy. Slavery having been abolished in the first half of the [641] seventeenth century for the aborigines, and civil and political rights having been granted them a short time afterward, cross-[829] breeding continued through marriage. Thus, today a large number of morenos explain their dark color by boasting about some ancestor pegado a dente de cachorro, that is to say, captured like an animal that one hunts in the virgin forest in the wild state. [161] But the number of natives decreased rapidly and had little influ-[167] ence on the formation of the Bahian type. The opposite /22/ [567] occurred with the Africans brought by the thousands and thousands to work on the sugar-cane plantations. The crossbreeding of Portuguese and Brazilians with Africans and Blacks born in Brazil was made possible and even favored by different factors, among them the scarcity of white women in the initial period, the slave system, the laxness of social control with regard to male sexual behavior, the physical and psychological charms of black women, in particular the minas Blacks, natives of the Costa da Mina in [829] the western Sudan. It was commonly said at that time that, in order to see beautiful Negresses, it was necessary to go to Bahia (1):

1. F. Biard, Deux années au Brésil /Two years in Brazil/, Paris, 1862.